The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Stake nothi[illegible] the hazards of chance.—M[illegible] Aurelius.

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Attacks On Unions Unfounded; Housing Shortage Has Been Met

New York, Dec. 26.—It seems but yesterday that the nation was alarmed at the "exactions of organized labor in the building industry." The people were told that "high" wages made it impossible to meet the housing shortage.

But now the facts are developing. At a meeting of 500 architects, contractors and builders, the corruption among these business men and the surplus buildings that have been erected, were frankly discussed. The speakers faced facts, and did not attempt to conceal these facts by attacking organized labor.

There was no talk of "inefficient labor," or "limitation of output" or any of the other red herrings. Instead, the speakers declared that loans on "crazy propositions," made by "disreputable" bonding houses, has brought the building industry of this city to the edge of "a very grave disaster."

Other speakers scored an element among the builders who thrive on graft, thefts, "rigging" of bids and the bungling work of incompetent architects. It was stated that these business "yeggs" employ henchmen to steal vast amounts of building material.

It was predicted that rents are "sagging" because of over-development in this industry and that loans in this city in the last three months for 34 apartment houses amounted to $19,000,000. "These loans were made on a market that doesn't need building," said one contractor. In nine new skyscrapers in this city, he said, "a dangerous amount of vacancy exists."

A committee was appointed to determine what course of action to take in dealing with the situation.

The Real Estate board is also considering the question and is investigating excessive real estate appraisals that were made for the purpose of inflated bond issues on new structures.

President Walsh of the board acknowledged that there is "some over-production" in building.

Reports from other sections, where the cry against organized labor was also raised, indicate that virtually all the larger cities, such as Cleveland, Detroit, Los Angeles, Cincinnati, Baltimore, Boston and St. Louis, "were caught up temporarily, at least," on apartment houses and home accommodations. Only three cities, Tampa and Miami, Fla., and Salt Lake City, Utah, reported any material housing shortage.

"CONSCRIPTION" OF CAPITAL IS FAKE

A national defense plan that is being worked out by the war department and industrial captains is called "conscription of capital and labor."

The proposal is now before congress. One newspaper enthusiastically declares: "In the next war capital and industry will be conscripted as well as men to fight."

Under this bill, the president may DRAFT the man power of the nation "without exception on account of industrial occupation," and may also "TAKE SUCH STEPS AS MAY BE NECESSARY TO CONTROL PRICES."

The public is not supposed to distinguish between CONSCRIPTING man power and CONTROLLING prices.

The man power is seized and put in the first line trenches, but the great productive machinery of the nation is not seized. Instead, the president will control prices.

The business man must not profiteer, but he will not lose anything. His prices will be controlled by the government, as in the last war.

He will be permitted to charge for depreciation—for wear and tear of his plant; for his salary, that will not be interfered with; for wages that the government will fix; for any changes he will have to make in his factory for the manufacture of war material; for interest on his investment, and for a sinking fund to retire outstanding bonds. All of these are charges on his industry.

Then he will be permitted to charge a "fair" profit.

This is what is called "conscription of capital," while human beings are actually, physically, conscripted.

GREEN ISSUES APPEAL IN BEHALF OF MINERS

Washington, Dec. 26.—Under authority of the A. F. of L. executive council, President Green has issued an appeal to organized labor to aid anthracite miners now on strike.

The United Mine Workers of America, he said, has expended many thousands of dollars each month for food, clothing and shelter for these workers and their families, but the burden has become too great.

"Organized labor must respond to the needs of the men, women and children in the anthracite region who are suffering from hunger," said President Green.

"The attitude of the anthracite coal operators is a challenge to the membership of the American Federation of Labor. Their unrelenting attitude toward employes and their indifference to the public welfare and public necessity can not fail to arouse the generous spirit of organized labor."

Every A. F. of L. national and international affiliate, every state, city central, the 35,000 local unions and individual members should "give and give generously," he said. Central bodies are urged to appoint committees to devise ways and means by which funds may be raised.

All contributions are to be forwarded to Frank Morrison, secretary of the A. F. of L., Washington.

MINERS CAN'T BE TRICKED; REJECT LATEST GOLD BRICK

Philadelphia, Dec. 26.—"The operators' plan wrapped in a new package," is what John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, terms a strike settlement proposed by a group of state legislators. The operators accepted the plan.

"This latest proposal," said President Lewis, "will not, of course, be given any consideration by the mine workers. The legislators have permitted themselves to be used as catspaws by the anthracite operators."

The legislators' plan calls for the immediate resumption of work at the old wage scale. After two months a committee of three miners and three operators would begin negotiating a new scale. All differences that can not be composed shall be referred to a board of settlement. This board shall consist of representatives of the miners and operators, without vote, and five members, with vote, who shall be appointed by the president of the United States or an alternate, by the chief justice of the United States supreme court, the chief justice of the Pennsylvania supreme court and the presiding judge of the United States circuit court of appeals, third district.

Rev. Fr. Curran of Wilkes-Barre, who has been active in the peace negotiations, denounced the proposal as "a rehash of the coal barons' plan which was given out to the public a few weeks ago."

"I am astonished," he said, "that these otherwise learned and business-like men would accept this camouflage that has been dripping from the mouths of the anthracite operators from the start.

"They would have the miners go back to work as they came out and then stand aside in mute admiration at the judicial powers of the state and nation while they hammered down the wages of the miners and increased the earnings of coal operators and railroad companies."

Unionists "Frame Up" Victims; Newspaper Aids Bungling Job

Chicago, Dec. 26.—Walter W. Britton, president of the Metal Polishers' International union, and Business Agent Werlik were victims of a bungling "frame-up" that would connect them with an alleged attempt to bomb the Cribben & Sexton Stove company plant. This concern manufactures "Universal" stoves, ranges and furnaces and is attempting to smash the Metal Polishers' union.

As a preliminary to the "frame-up," the Chicago Tribune printed a lurid story of a bombing outrage that was not attempted. The bomber lost his nerve, according to the Tribune, because the watchman at the plant had several children, "but he (the bomber) was only waiting till a policeman was detailed as watchman who had no children, when the job would be completed," said the Tribune. It was further stated that State's Attorney Crowe has possession of this evidence.

With this as a foundation, the two unionists were taken to the offices of the state's attorney at the county jail by three detectives. They were denied an attorney, shut off from outside communication and subjected to the third degree on the Cribben & Sexton strike. Owners of anti-union job shops and other persons believed to be private detectives were permitted to view the trade union officials.

The grand jury was in session at the time, but refused to consider an indictment. By accident a friend of the unionists discovered their predicament and called their attorney, who threatened to sue out a habeas corpus writ unless sufficient evidence was produced to secure their immediate indictment.

This unlooked-for move caused a scurry, and after five hours' confinement they were released with the threat, "We'll get you yet."

These are State's Attorney Crowe's methods to "enforce law"—when trade unionists are on strike. Only recently Coroner Oscar Wolff charged Crowe with "the real responsibility for the reign of murder and lawlessness" in this city. The coroner found it impossible to secure assistance from Crowe's office in convicting gunmen. The coroner exhibited a photograph of a banquet tendered to Crowe, last year, in which recognized leaders of gun men and gangsters sat at the speaker's table with the state's attorney.

Fascism Linked With Communism; Both Are Enemies Of Democracy

Washington, Dec. 26.—By authority of the A. F. of L. executive council, President Green warns the trade union movement and the people generally "to be prepared to meet the propaganda of fascisimo with as strong opposition as they have made to communism."

"It would seem that the word 'liberty' has been expunged from the dictionaries of Italy," said President Green.

"After Mussolini first entered Rome with many thousands of the black-shirted fascisti he forced the fall of the government and his appointment by the king as premier.

"He immediately began to oppose the established voluntary trade unions. In Moscow, when genuine trade unionists rebelled against communism, their leaders were stood against a wall and shot to death. Mussolini set out to crush the existing bona fide trade unions of Italy. Labor papers were suppressed, union halls raided, thousands sent to prisons and others disappeared.

"Mussolini has organized what he terms fascist 'unions,' which limit the membership to 10 per cent of the employes of a district. These 'unions,' however, are given jurisdiction over all wage earners in their respective districts, but only members can take part and vote on matters of any kind. The decisions of these fascist 'unions' bind all employes and Mussolini dictates the policies of these fascist 'unions.'

"Mussolini is above parliament, and the king has been made his vassal. Parliament is a puppet and must do his bidding. The sword has taken the place of reason in Italy.

"Not satisfied with the powers of a dictator, he has extended the tentacles of fascisimo into other countries. His dictum that 'once an Italian always an Italian to the seventh generation' prohibits Italian immigrants to the United States becoming naturalized. They must remain Italian citizens and bow to fascisimo. If they enter any organization having for its purpose opposition to fascisimo their property in Italy will be confiscated.

"Organizations have been formed in this country to discourage the naturalization of Italian immigrants. If they do not obey, their families in Italy are subject to persecution.

"Like the communists who seek to overthrow all governments, fascisimo is endeavoring to install that blighting philosophy among the people of every nation.

"Fascisimo and communism have the same fangs and the same poison which it is intended to inject into the political life of our nation.

"The executive council feels that the wage earners of America and the people generally should be warned of the tactics and policy of Dictator Mussolini and the fascist movement as it affects America.

"The executive council hopes that none of the Italian members of trade unions will submit to the threats of this dictator. He and his fascisimo are as great a menace to the peace of the world as is communism."

"PATRIOTIC" BUSINESS MEN BOYCOTT AMERICAN SHIPS

New York, Dec. 26.—If American business men want an American merchant marine, let them cease patronizing foreign vessels.

This is the substance of an address by T. V. O'Connor, chairman of the United States shipping board, before the American Manufacturers' Export association.

Mr. O'Connor made this significant suggestion:

"If this organization wants to be of real help to the American merchant marine, I would advise that you appoint a committee from the importers and the exporters and let them give the necessary orders, and your American merchant marine will be a success.

"The vessels which we operate are not in competition with privately-owned American ships. We are not in competition with any American in the shipping business unless that American owns stock in a foreign shipping company. If we sell a line to an American citizen, we certainly do not interfere with his progress, because on the line which he buys he has, for a period of years, a practical monopoly, as far as American flag ships are concerned.

"Since 1921 this board has sold more than 1,300 ships, 800 of which are sailing the oceans under the American flag. Bids have been asked for other important lines."

Mr. O'Connor cited instances to prove his point that American business men do not patronize American ships, while publicly bemoaning that this country has no merchant marine.

He showed that the steel trust, this year, carried less than 400 tons of its products in American ships from New York to South Africa, and in the same period foreign ships carried more than 6,000 tons of the same products to the same ports, while the steel trust sets rates for this freight.

The speech is in line with an address by United States Senator Ransdell of Louisiana in 1921 in which it was shown that many large railroad systems of this country had contracts with foreign vessels to export American freight. Some of these railroads agreed to use their influence to secure lower taxes and cheap dockage and coal charges in American cities for these foreign vessels.

LIVING COSTS SOAR; CONGRESS TO PROBE

Washington, Dec. 26.—Members of congress are receiving protests on the mounting cost of living. The United States bureau of labor statistics says the retail food index shows for November 15 an increase of almost 3½ per cent since October 15, 1925; an increase of about 11½ per cent since November 15, 1924, and an increase of 59¼ per cent since November 15, 1913.

Every effort is being made by politicians to convince the people that living costs are being lowered, but the test on the national pocketbook is the best answer.

The protests have stirred members of the house, and a committee has voted to probe soaring prices in the District of Columbia.

CORONADO COAL SUIT RESULTS IN MISTRIAL

Fort Smith, Ark., Dec. 26.—After 72 hours of deliberation a jury reported to Federal Judge Molyneaux that they were unable to agree in the Coronado Coal company's $2,200,000 anti-trust suit against district No. 21, United Mine Workers.

The case now stands practically the same as it did 11 years ago, when this company started suit against the district and the international miners' organizations for damages because of destruction of property following its violation of contract and declaration for the anti-union shop.

The United States supreme court reversed a triple damage award of $2,200,000 against the two organizations. The court held that there was no evidence to show that the international organization called the strike or took part in that movement. In remanding the case to the lower court for trial of the district organization, the supreme court went out of its way to say that trade unions can be sued for damages.

Chief Justice Taft took the unusual position of expressing regret that damages could not be fastened on the United Mine Workers. He said:

"The circumstances are such as to awaken regret that in our view of the federal jurisdiction, we can not affirm the judgment."

NEW INJUNCTION BILL HALTS EQUITY JUDGES

Washington, Dec. 26.—Senator Shipstead has introduced a bill that would limit the injunction to its original purpose—protection of property where the plaintiff has no other remedy at law.

All confusing verbiage has been eliminaated in the bill, which provides that a thing done in a labor dispute is lawful if the same thing is lawful when done by an individual.

The bill provides that where an irreparable injury to property is threatened, and where there is no adequate remedy at law, "such property or property right must be particularly described in the application or in an affidavit or affidavits, or if based upon a verified bill or other written application, the same must be sworn to by the applicant or his, her, or its agents or attorney."

The act specifically declares that the right to do business shall not be considered a "property" right. Injunction judges ignore the fact that the right to do business is a personal right, and that patronage can not be held to a business by the injunction process. All acts and parts of acts in conflict with the Shipstead proposal would be repealed.

LIFE INSURANCE PLAN DEVELOPED BY UNIONS

Washington, Dec. 26.—In a letter to executives and secretaries of A. F. of L. affiliates, Matthew Woll, president of the newly-formed Union Labor Life Insurance company, invites these trade unionists to serve as members of an advisory committee in the company.

Mr. Woll points out that the bylaws of the company provide for the creation of this committee, which shall meet annually to consider the company's progress and also "consider and recommend ways and means of increasing the business of the company and the service it renders to the policy holders and particularly plans for the co-ordination of the company with the aims and purposes of the A. F. of L."

The structure of the company is such as to assure its perpetual ownership and control by the trade union movement, as represented by the A. F. of L. The charter provides that the stock shall be owned only by trade unions and trade unionists, and that at least three-fourths of its directors shall at all times be representatives of A. F. of L. national and international affiliates.

Through the machinery of the A. F. of L. all information and data on life insurance was collected and turned over to representatives of the trade union movement, who were called in conference by President Green. These representatives approved the project and organized the company.

MUSSOLINI'S FRIENDS WANT SENATE GAGGED

Boston, Dec. 26.—Speaking before the Central Labor Union, former United States Senator Walsh made a smashing attack on Vice President Dawes' proposal to check senate debate.

Senator Walsh said senators are "ambassadors from their states"; that they have the right to talk just as often as they see fit in defense of their states' interests, and that this has been the policy of the senate from its inception.

The speaker declared that the Dawes proposal would make the senate as powerless against wrong as the house is. He said that the many able men in the house are not permitted to speak under the rules, but must secure permission from a committee that has been developed under the caucus system.

Senator Walsh agreed with Andrew Furuseth, president of the International Seamen's union—who preceded him—that the Dawes' plan is part of the campaign of the Third Estate—big business, which is the present governing class—to subordinate the legislative branch of government to the executive and the judiciary. The trade unionist called attention to the world-wide attack on parliamentary forms of government by the Third Estate.

"The Third Estate has no further use for the legislative branch," said President Furuseth. "It wants to hold what it has, and favors a dictator form of government."

PORTO RICAN RELIEF URGED BY LAWMAKERS

Washington, Dec. 26.—Members of congress are preparing bills to relieve wretched conditions in Porto Rico. One of the bills will provide that $50,000,000 be loaned to that island to create a trust fund for these purposes:

For promoting agricultural and industrial schools; to foster the industrial development of the island; to transfer to island authorities all lands and franchises illegally held by absentee or resident landlords and corporations; to consolidate and cancel at any time the public debt of Porto Rico.

Another bill would enforce a joint resolution passed by congress in May, 1920, with respect to the buying, selling or holding of real estate and to impose additional and progressive taxes on all property owned or controlled in excess of 500 acres by corporations and partnerships. Under an act of congress large land ownership is prohibited, but the corporations ignore this law, and the island is rapidly passing under the control of absentee landlords.

Porto Rico has been controlled by the bureau of insular affairs of the war department since the Spanish war. No attempt has been made to institute constructive reforms and the exploiters are responsible for present conditions. General Frank McIntyre, chief of the bureau, recommends that thousands of families leave their homes and emigrate to other countries. Friends of Porto Rico in this country insist that military control is incompetent and that the island be placed under a civilian department of the government.

INJUNCTION JUDGE FACES INDICTMENT

Washington, Dec. 26.—A special congressional committee, appointed to inquire into the conduct of Federal Judge English of East St. Louis, recommends that he be impeached.

The committee reports that he "has been guilty of acts which in contemplation of the Constitution of the United States are high crimes and misdemeanors requiring the interposition of the constitutional powers of the House of Representatives of the United States."

The committee uncovered scandalous personal and official conduct by the accused. These charges include graft and using his position for personal gain. Among his many misdemeanors was the appointment of former law partners as receivers for bankrupt firms. The receivers made their reports to Judge English.

During the nation-wide shopmen's strike this jurist took first rank among the country's injunction judges. He was given first page space in the daily press because of his denunciation and abuse of railroad strikers who were haled before him.

MAGEE PARDON UPHELD; FIGHTING EDITOR WINS

Albuquerque, N. Mex., Dec. 26.—The state supreme court has upheld Governor Hinkle's pardon of Carl Magee, New Mexico editor, who was sentenced by Judge Leahy to 90 days in jail for contempt of court. The newspaper man opposed Leahy's election. The governor pardoned Magee last year, but this was ignored by the sheriff, who held that the governor had no authority to issue the pardon. After three days in jail Magee was released on habeas corpus proceedings and the case was carried to the supreme court.

It was Magee who gave the first important "lead" to the congressional committee that was investigating the transfer of the Teapot Dome oil lease. He went to Washington as a witness and told of Secretary of the Interior Fall's sudden prosperity and the improvements on his ranch property following the oil transfers.

RAILROAD IS TIED UP; STRIKE CAUSES EMBARGO

Jacksonville, Fla., Dec. 26.—The embargo on express shipments by the American Express company again calls attention to the failure of the Atlantic Coast Line to keep its system operating with strikebreaking telegraphers.

Members of the Order of Railroad Telegraphers suspended work after months of futile effort to secure a standard wage.

The collapse of the Coast Line threw too great a burden on other railroads and Florida citizens are frantic over freight and express congestion at a time when their fruit should be rushed to northern markets. Practically every newspaper in the state denounces the Coast Line, and the vast sums of money it has spent to build up a friendly public sentiment is now classed as waste.

RAILROADS SPEED UP AS WORKERS ADVISED

New York, Dec. 26.—When the railroad brotherhoods were urging the eight-hour day that resulted in the Adamson law, these workers insisted that if railroad freight were speeded up, instead of being sidetracked on switches and in yards, the railroads and business would profit by the shorter workday.

This claim was not answered at the time, but since then the railroads have acted on the suggestion. In a recent speech at Worcester, Mass., T. F. Joyce, an official of the Boston & Maine railroad, said that that railroad has increased its net ton miles a day. The figures for the first 10 months of this year is an increase from 12,613 to 13,562 gross ton miles of freight per hour, and from 275 to 305 net ton miles per car day over a like period last year.

PRISON WARDEN HEADS DEATH PENALTY DRIVE

New York, Dec. 26.—Lewis E. Lawes, warden of Sing Sing prison, has taken the chairmanship of the League for the Abolition of Capital Punishment, a national organization.

"We are not sentimental in this campaign," said Warden Lawes. "Penologists have long known that it is the certainty, not the nature of the penalty, that deters crime. We find fewer homicidal crimes in states that have abolished the death penalty than in those where it is retained. There are also more convictions in the abolition states. We have had capital punishment for generations and are as far from a successful solution of the problem of homicide as ever."

Warden Lawes said that after 20 years in penal work and six years as warden of Sing Sing, and after investigation and intensive study, he not only does not believe in the death penalty as a deterrent, but that he is prepared to work for a practical solution of the problem. He advocates life sentence as a substitute, with no rehearing for at least 20 years, except on order from the state supreme court showing ground for reopening a case.

"INDEPENDENT" MINER HAS SORROWFUL TALE

Cedar Grove, W. Va., Dec. 26.—Carl Gray, miner, employed by the anti-union West Virginia Coal and Coke company, no longer favors the "American plan" that coal operators so earnestly urge.

The reason for Gray's changed viewpoint is that he worked two weeks and found himself in debt $1.76 to the company. He was then thrown in jail for failure to pay his board bill.

His statement from the company shows that during the last two weeks in October he mined 70 cars of coal at 44 cents a ton. This made his total earnings $33 for that period. Coupons, good at the company store, charges for the doctor, for the hospital, for blacksmithing and other deductions made him a company debtor. Then the landlord had him arrested. The gun men who "protect" him while at work refused to come to his aid and he was bailed out of jail by his father, a striking miner, who refuses to accept these conditions.

OPPOSE SUNDAY SHOWS

New York, Dec. 26.—The Actors' Equity association warns theatrical managers that it will resist the attempt to install Sunday shows in this city. The association is affiliated to the A. F. of L., and includes in its membership the country's leading theatrical stars.

The actors call for a strict interpretation of a 10-year agreement made a year and a half ago between them and the managers.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM OF NEW YORK UNIONISTS

Albany, N. Y., Dec. 26.—The state federation of labor has submitted its legislative program to Governor Smith for favorable consideration in drafting his annual message.

The four major sections of the program are:

Prohibiting issuance of injunctions in industrial disputes unless authorized by a verdict after trial of the facts before a judge and jury.

Ratification by the legislature of the federal child labor amendment.

An exclusive state insurance fund for workmen's compensation.

Amending anti-monopoly law to provide that the labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce.

END OF HOME COOKING PREDICTED BY COPELAND

New York, Dec. 26.—Community commissaries will be replaced by home cooking in the next 25 years, said Senator Copeland in an address to restaurant owners.

"The restaurant will have almost entirely taken the place of the home kitchen in metropolitan life," said the speaker. "The growth of this industry during the last 25 years has been extraordinary, and that growth is only in its infancy."

PARTY SYSTEM DOOMED

New York, Dec. 26.—The political machines of cities are threatening the political party system in this country, said Alderman George U. Harvey in an address before college men. The cities are being governed by dictators and representative government no longer exists in many large cities, he said.

STEWART REAPPOINTED

Washington, Dec. 26.—The president has reappointed Ethelbert Stewart as commissioner of the bureau of labor statistics. Mr. Stewart prepares the cost of living statistics that are issued by the government.

PRINTING PRESSMEN UNITE

Jackson, Tenn., Dec. 26.—Printing pressmen and assistants have organized.

HAND WORK DECLINES

Washington, Dec. 26.—The manufacture of hand-made cigars dropped almost one-half in two years, according to the Monthly Labor Review, issued by the United States department of labor. At the present time there are 7,817 workers now making cigars entirely by hand, as against 13,305 in August, 1923.

There are at present 110,404 persons employed in the cigar industry, of whom 99,354 are in the United States and 11,050 are in Porto Rico, where hand work is the prevailing system.

RETAIN SEVEN-DAY WEEK

Olympia, Wash., Dec. 26.—The state senate rejected a bill which would give street car men one day's rest in seven. The Washington Water Power company, owner of the Spokane street car system, led the fight against the bill. Spokane street car employes are unorganized. They petitioned the legislature to permit them to work seven days a week. In many sections of the state, where these workers are organized, the seven-day week has been abolished.

REHEARING DENIED

Washington, Dec. 26.—The District of Columbia court of appeals has denied the application of Albert B. Fall, former secretary of the interior; Edward L. Doheny, oil magnate, and his son, for a rehearing of the government's successful appeal from a decision quashing the bribery indictment in connection with the Elks Hill oil reserve lease.

This indictment involves the "little black satchel" in which the government claims $100,000 was carried to Fall.

WHO EMPLOYS GANGSTERS?

Chicago, Dec. 26.—After organized workers in this city have been jailed and forced to spend large sums fighting "frame-ups," Assistant State's Attorney Joseph P. Savage made this statement in an address to the Chicago Association of Credit Men:

"The state must direct its 'bomb plot' attacks against the big, supposedly respectable business men who are employers of gangsters and bombers."

OPPOSES POWER LEASE

Washington, Dec. 26.—Senator McKellar objects to turning over water-power rights in the Tennessee river to the electric power trust. In a telegram to Chattanooga business men, he says the trust might "strangle for all time the development of commercial and manufacturing interests in Tennessee."